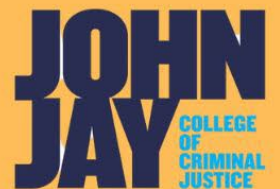


Leading and Learning Toward a Future for All

2026 SELC - 25TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE



May 28-30, 2026
Newark, New Jersey



Welcome



Dear Conference Participants,

Welcome. It is an honor to have the National Academy of Public Administration co-host SELC 2026, especially during our country's 250th anniversary, and as SELC celebrates 25 years of advancing community, dialogue, values and outcomes that make us a stronger nation. This work comes at a particularly important time for the field of Public Administration and the American public. As we meet, much of the national debate is centered on the definitions of diversity and equity, and what guiding principles we follow to uplift all Americans.

Equity is a key pillar of public administration. Without it, our field and society will not meet its full potential, so we must ensure that we do our work intentionally, inclusively, non-judgmentally, and with an appreciation for the rich history that has brought us to this moment.

While no nation is perfect, I believe the United States remains the greatest governance experiment on earth, strengthened by our collective identities, backgrounds and ideological beliefs. We must continue to challenge our thinking with an aim to be the best versions of ourselves and to imagine a better future for all.

SELC brings together scholars and practitioners grounded in the values that benefit all people across our communities. I am encouraged by the promise of this work and believe it is our job—together—to ensure a more prosperous, thriving nation.

I am deeply grateful for our conference co-chairs, committee members, featured speakers, presenters, Academy fellows and all participants. Thank you for your commitment to learning, evolving, and standing firm on the principles that uplift and benefit all.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James-Christian B. Blockwood".

James-Christian B. Blockwood

President and CEO

National Academy of Public Administration

Welcome



It is my pleasure to welcome you to the 25th anniversary of the Social Equity Leadership Conference (SELC) at Rutgers University–Newark. This year’s theme, “Leading and Learning Toward a Future for All – A 25th SELC Anniversary Celebration,” powerfully reflects both the mission of this conference and the values of our institution. I extend my sincere thanks to the organizers, speakers, and partners whose extraordinary work has made SELC a nationally respected convening focused on advancing equity in leadership, policy, and practice.

As we celebrate 80 years of Rutgers–Newark, we honor a legacy grounded in social equity, human rights, and social justice. As a public research university and anchor institution, Rutgers–Newark has long expanded access to opportunity and partnered with communities to address pressing societal challenges. Today, we continue to lead through forward-thinking, community-engaged research and education that advances the public good.

At a moment when hard-won civil rights are being tested and public discourse too often undermines social justice and our shared humanity, SELC’s work is more vital than ever. Building a future for all requires courageous leadership, evidence-informed policy, and sustained partnership with communities—grounded in dignity, inclusion, and accountability.

Best wishes for an informative conference.

Sincerely,

Tonya Smith-Jackson
Tonya Smith-Jackson, PhD, CPE
Chancellor



Thank you for joining us at the Social Equity Leadership Conference 25th Anniversary Celebration. The important work ahead of us is clear: As global citizens, we are committed to building a future where everyone—no matter where they are from, what they look like, what they believe in, or who they love—is free to thrive and live out their dreams.

Even as we face challenging headwinds in today’s ever-changing political climate, we must stay optimistic, focused, and engaged in work that dismantles unjust obstacles to growth, happiness, and prosperity. By disrupting the cycle of inequity that blocks many in our society from opportunity, we honor the courage and sacrifice of the generations who came before us. Enacting change depends on our actions, collaboration, and imagination. Together, we can fortify the rights, protections, and freedoms that make our country great. Furthermore, we can ensure that our systems serve us all, instead of a precious few.

I am grateful to everyone who made this convening possible and I look forward to learning from and partnering with you all in this vital journey.

Sincerely,

Karol V. Mason
Karol V. Mason
President

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Event Name	Day & Date	Times
Breakfast	Thursday, May 28 th	7:45 am - 8:45 am
Welcoming Remarks	Thursday, May 28 th	9:00 am - 9:45 am
Opening Plenary: The Revitalization of Newark – A Story of Resilience and Hope	Thursday, May 28 th	9:45 am - 11:00 am
Concurrent Sessions	Thursday, May 28 th	11:15 am - 12:30 pm
Keynote Speaker Lunch	Thursday, May 28 th	12:30 pm - 1:45 pm
Concurrent Sessions	Thursday, May 28 th	2:00 pm - 3:15 pm
Afternoon Plenary: Holding on to Social Equity in Challenging Times	Thursday, May 28 th	3:30 pm – 4:45 pm
Concurrent Sessions	Thursday, May 28 th	4:45 pm – 6:00 pm
25 th Anniversary Reception	Thursday, May 28 th	6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
Breakfast	Friday, May 29 th	7:45 am – 8:45 am
Concurrent Sessions	Friday, May 29 th	9:00 am – 10:15 am
Morning Plenary: Challenges to Governing - Gender as an Added Dimension	Friday, May 29 th	10:30 am – 11:45 am
SELC Awards Luncheon/Frederickson Lecture	Friday, May 29 th	12:00 pm – 1:30 pm
Concurrent Sessions	Friday, May 29 th	1:45 pm – 3:00 pm
Afternoon Plenary: Innovations for Enhancing Equity in Public Safety - Newark’s Story	Friday, May 29 th	3:15 pm – 4:30 pm
Concurrent Sessions	Friday, May 29 th	4:45 pm – 6:00 pm
Evening Reception	Friday, May 29 th	6:00 pm – 7:30 pm
Breakfast	Saturday, May 30 th	7:45 am – 8:45 am
Poster Sessions	Saturday, May 30 th	9:00 am – 10:15 am
Concurrent Sessions	Saturday, May 30 th	9:00 am – 10:15 am
Concurrent Sessions	Saturday, May 30 th	10:30 am – 11:45 am
Closing Plenary: The Future of Equity in a Changing World	Saturday, May 30 th	12:00 pm – 1:15 pm

All sessions will be held in the Ruth Bater Ginsberg Building (RBG) at 15 Washington Street or the School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA) Building at 111 Washington Street.

*Denotes NAPA Fellows throughout the program.

CONFERENCE SPONSERS

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of Public Policy
& Public Administration

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King County

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School of Public Affairs
and Administration

**JOHN
JAY** COLLEGE
OF
CRIMINAL
JUSTICE

ASPA
American Society for
Public Administration

ASPA
American Society for Public Administration
*Section on Democracy
and Social Justice*

SPECIAL THANKS

Diane Hill, Rutgers Center for Health Excellence and Community Empowerment
RaJade Berry-James, Virginia Commonwealth University
Marilyn Rubin, Rutgers University – Newark
Jason D. Rivera, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

CONFERENCE ORGANIZERS

Conference Co-Chairs

Jason D. Rivera, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Marilyn Rubin, Rutgers University – Newark*

Advisory Board Members

Mohamad Alkadry, University of Connecticut*
John Bartle, University of Nebraska – Omaha*
RaJade Berry-James, Virginia Commonwealth University*
Kaitlyn Blume, National Academy of Public Administration
Mindy Bockstein, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Susan Gooden, Virginia Commonwealth University*
Mary Guy, University of Colorado – Denver*
Michael Jacobson, NAPA Standing Panel on Social Equity in Governance*
Richard Gregory Johnson III, University of San Francisco*
Anne Khademain, The Universities at Shady Grove*
Shante Palmer, Rutgers University - Newark
Norma Riccucci, Rutgers University – Newark*

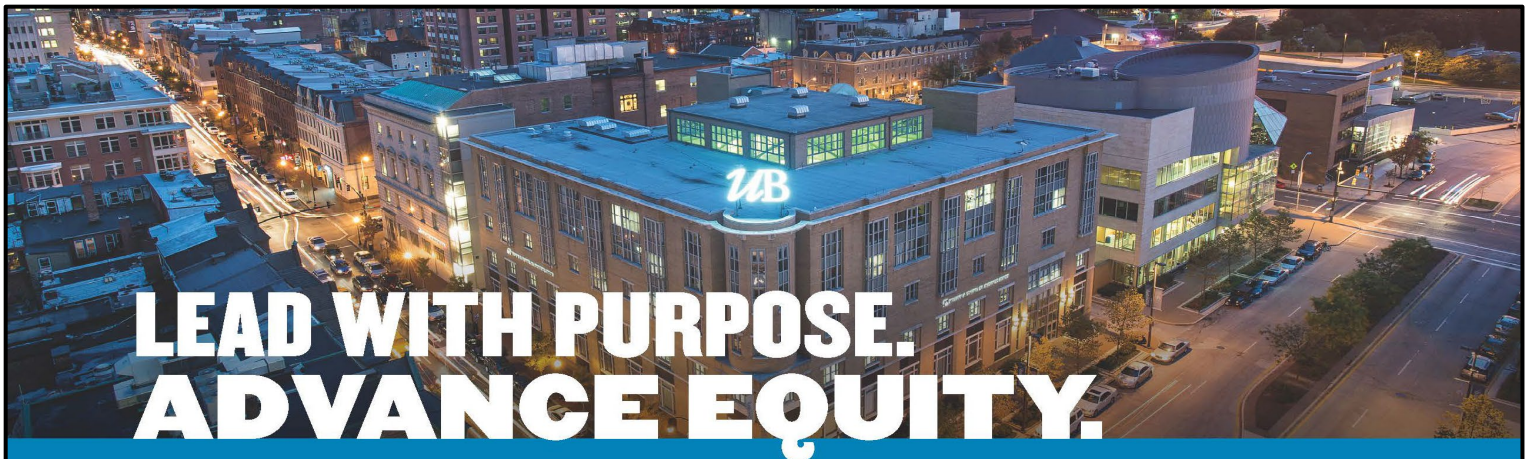
Conference Program Committee Members

Katherine Barrett, Frederickson Center for Social Equity*
Domonic Bearfield, George Washington University*
Felipe Blanco, University of Colorado - Denver
Maria J. D'Agostino, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Renzo de la Riva Agüero, University of Connecticut

Kimberly Desmond, City of San Diego
Ratna Dougherty, University of South Florida
Christal Hamilton, University of Connecticut
Diane Hill, Rutgers University - Newark
Luke Jones, Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE)
Wendy Nicholson, Independent Social Equity Strategist
Pooja Paswan, Jamia Millia Islamia
Gregory Porumbescu, Rutgers University - Newark
Merlene-Patrice Bourdeau Quispe, Southern University & A&M College
Margaret Simms, Vice-Chair, NAPA Standing Panel on Social Equity*
Kimberly Walton, NAPA Fellow & SynergyUSA, LLC.*
James Wright, Arizona State University

Conference Staff

Jingyan Cheng, Rutgers University – Newark
Navoda Katukurunde Hewage, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Shonda Levine-Ouji, Rutgers University – Newark
Joseph Mahmud, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Carol Monroe, Rutgers University – Newark
Joshua Richey, Rutgers University – Newark
Ginger Swiston, Rutgers University – Newark



Equity-centered leadership requires more than intention—it demands the ability to analyze policy, navigate complex systems and lead meaningful change.

The College of Public Affairs at The University of Baltimore prepares professionals to meet that challenge through nationally recognized programs focused on public service, policy and leadership.

Flexible, affordable and designed for working leaders.



LEARN MORE
UBALT.EDU/CPA

Application fee waiver:
SELC2026



PRACTITIONERS IN EXCELLENCE

In addition to the more than 100 conference participants whose primary affiliation is an academic institution, a significant number of practitioners are also on conference panels. We thank the practitioners listed below for their conference participation and for helping to advance social justice.

Kecia Addison, Montgomery County Public Schools
Katherine Barrett, Frederickson Center for Social Equity*
Amina Bey, Newark City Council
Stella Billings, Safe Horizon
James Blaney, Newark City Council
Nic Bloom, Prarthertown Community Development
Gale Brewer, New York City Council
Jennifer Broadus, King County
Allison Chris Meyers, NJ Civil service Commission (Retired)
Jordan Costa, GIFFORDS Center for Violence Intervention
Alan Curtis, The Eisenhower Foundation
Marc Dashield, Wendell Group LLC
Jesselly De La Cruz, Latino Action Network Foundation
Claire Dillon, Cook County Commission on Human Rights
Josh Diosomito, Public Policy & International Affairs (PPIA) Program
Jeehae Fischer, Korean American Family Service Center
Kayla Fox, Seattle-King County Public Health Moderator
Steven Francisco, Leadership for Educational Equity
Alejandro Gimenez Santana, Newark Public Safety Collaborative
Aisha Browne Glover, Urban Innovation Audible, Inc.
Walker Gosrich, New Jersey Innovation Authority
Markus Green, Dicello Levitt, LLP
Richard Greene, Frederickson Center for Social Equity*
Peter Harvey, Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP
Adair Iacono, Vera Institute
Michael Jacobson, NAPA Standing Panel on Social Equity in Governance*
Luke Jones, Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE)
Lucy Lang, New York State's Office of the Inspector General
Andre Lynch, AMPLE Consulting, LLC.
Andrea Martinez-Mejia, Greater Newark Health Care Coalition
Kenyatta McLean, Seam Social Labs
Kelly Mulligan, Newark Community Solutions
john miller, King County Department of Public Health
Mariana Monteiro, Office of Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont
Reeni Nair, Seattle-King County Public Health
Hon. Julien Xavier Neals, U.S. District Court, District of New Jersey
Tiasia O'Brien, Seam Social Labs
Michael Obasohan, City of Pittsfield, MA
Saundra Prather, Prarthertown Community Development Corporation
Carl Prather, Human Rights Hall of Fame
Stacy Rogers, National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA)*
Adriana Santos, Newark Public Safety Collaborative
Munazzah Shahbaas, Newark Public Safety Collaborative
Aqeela Sherrills, Community Based Public Safety Collective
dae shogren, King County Council
William Simpson II, Victoria Foundation
Warren Thompson, Lincoln Park Coast Cultural District
Mariel Torres-Mehdipour, Seattle-King County Public Health
Debbie Walsh, Center for American Women and Politics
Kimberly Watson, Graham
Wenjun Yang, Kansas Department of Transportation

CONFERENCE AGENDA

THURSDAY, MAY 28TH 9:00-9:45 AM

Opening Remarks

Location: RBG Building, Great Hall

Kaifeng Yang*, Dean of the School of Public Affairs and Administration at Rutgers University – Newark will welcome attendees and introduce speakers to make opening remarks:

Newark City Council

John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Rutgers University – Newark

The National Academy of Public Administration

The National Academy of Public Administration Standing Panel on Social Equity in Governance

THURSDAY, MAY 28TH 9:45-11:00 AM

Opening Plenary: The Revitalization of Newark: A Story of Resilience and Hope

Location: RBG Building, Great Hall

Diane Hill, Rutgers Center for Health Excellence and Community Empowerment

Junius Williams, Esq., Official Newark Historian

David Troutt, Rutgers Center on Law and Metropolitan Equity (CLiME)

Aisha Browne Glover, Urban Innovation Audible, Inc.

Andrea Martinez-Mejia, Greater Newark Health Care Coalition

THURSDAY, MAY 28TH 11:15-12:30 PM

Panel 1: Equity to Improve Governance

Location: RBG Building, Room 206

Farzana Sharmin, Northern Illinois University

Wenjun Yang, Kansas Department of Transportation

Rong Zhao, CUNY-Hunter College

Moderator:

Pooja Paswan, Jamia Millia Islamia

Roundtable 1: Harnessing New Jersey with Evidence to Promote Equitable Public Education and Workforce

Location: RBG Building, Room 207

Khudodod Khudododov, Rutgers University

Ann Obadan, Rutgers University

Moderator:

Stephanie Walsh, Rutgers University

Panel 2: King County's Evolving Equity Practices: Improving Culture and Embedding Equity into Our Processes

Location: RBG Building, Room 201

dae shogren, King County Council

john miller, King County Department of Public Health

Reeni Nair, King County Department of Public Health

Jennifer Broadus, King County Information Technology

Moderator:

Michael Jacobson, NAPA Standing Panel on Social Equity in Governance*

Workshop 1: Democratizing Academic Excellence: Leveraging AI Tools to Bridge Equity Gaps

Location: RBG Building, Room 123

Michael Sabato, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

THURSDAY, MAY 28TH 12:30 – 1:45 PM

Keynote Speaker Lunch

Location: RBG Building, Great Hall

Keynote Speaker:

Dale G. Caldwell, Lt. Governor of New Jersey

THURSDAY, MAY 28TH 2:00-3:15 PM

Panel 3: Addressing Issues of Equity in Emergency Management Across Policy Spaces: Social Equity Actions to Improve Governance

Location: RBG Building, Room 207

Denise Thompson, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Clara Mey, University of Delaware; Jennifer Trivedi, University of Delaware

Sara Belligoni, John Jay College of Criminal Justice; Elian Morales, University of Central Florida; Fernando I. Rivera, University of Central Florida

Gulrukh Kakar, University of Delaware; Joseph Trainor, University of Delaware; Jennifer Trivedi, University of Delaware

Moderator:

Jason Rivera, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Panel 4: AI, Emerging Tech and Good Governance?

Location: RBG Building, Room 123

Canyu Gao, Rutgers University-Newark

Walker Gosrich, New Jersey Innovation Authority

Gregory Porumbescu, Rutgers University - Newark

Moderator:

Gregory Porumbescu, Rutgers University - Newark

Panel 5: Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education

Location: RBG Building, Room 201

Rachel Emas, George Washington University; Jamie Levine-Daniel, New York University

Gina Scutelnicu Todoran, Pace University

Calaia Jackson, University of Delaware; Yunru "Barbara" Lu, University of Delaware; Jessica Sowa, University of Delaware

Theodore Johnson, University of Nebraska at Omaha; Ozalle Toms; Amaya Gaines, Cornell University; Arlean Timmons

Moderator:

Susan Gooden, Virginia Commonwealth University*

Roundtable 2: From Numbers to Transformation: Building Collective Power Through Equity-Centered Budget Decisions

Location: RBG Building, Room 206

john miller, King County Public Health

Mariel Torres-Mehdipour, Seattle-King County Public Health

Kayla Fox, Seattle-King County Public Health

Moderator:

Reeni Nair, Seattle-King County Public Health

THURSDAY, MAY 28TH 3:30 -4:45 PM

Afternoon Plenary: Holding on to Social Equity in Challenging Times

Location: RBG Building, Great Hall

Samuel Myers, Jr., University of Minnesota*

Susan Gooden, Virginia Commonwealth University*

RaJade M. Berry-James, Virginia Commonwealth University*

Luke Jones, Society of American Indian Government Employees (SAIGE)

Jesselly De La Cruz, Latino Action Network Foundation

THURSDAY, MAY 28TH 4:45-6:00 PM

Panel 6: Fortifying the Inspector General’s Leadership in Advancing Social Equity

Location: RBG Building, Room 206

Lucy Lang, New York State’s Office of the Inspector General

David Eichenthal, CUNY Center for Urban Research

Yahong Zhang, Rutgers University – Newark

Moderator:

Daniel Feldman, John Jay College of Criminal Justice*

Roundtable 3: Pedagogy of Stories: Designing Inclusive Narrative Learning for Executive Public Administration

Location: SPAA Building, Room 215

Jenna Rowson, University of Connecticut

James Nolting, University of Connecticut

Sarah Dorr, University of Connecticut

Camilo Lemos, University of Connecticut

Moderator:

Mohamad Alkadry, University of Connecticut*

Roundtable 4: Who Gets to Lead When Public Service Careers Feel Risky? Strengthening Equitable Pathways into Leadership

Location: RBG Building, Room 201

Stacy Rogers, National Forum for Black Public Administrators (NFBPA)*

Steven Francisco, Leadership for Educational Equity

Anika Evans, Center for Excellence in Public & Government Service

Moderator:

Josh Diosomito, Public Policy & International Affairs (PPIA) Program

Panel 7: Reproductive Rights, Transgender Healthcare Policy, and Cannabis: State Responses to Federal Change

Location: RBG Building, Room 123

Yali Pang, Virginia Commonwealth University

Craig Dearfield, Virginia Commonwealth University

Morgan Woodle, Virginia Commonwealth University

Moderator:

Katherine Barrett, Frederickson Center for Social Equity*

THURSDAY, MAY 28TH 6:00-7:30 PM

25TH ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION, RBG BUILDING, GREAT HALL

JOIN THE EVANS SCHOOL IN BUILDING A STRONGER AND MORE JUST WORLD

Guided by our shared values of equity, courage, and service, the **Evans School of Public Policy & Governance** at the University of Washington is educating leaders, generating knowledge, and hosting communities to co-create a more inclusive society. We are doing this because we believe everyone benefits from a democratic system that includes everyone and serves everyone.



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UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON



EQUITY

We commit to discovering and daylighting disparities, taking anti-racist action, and dismantling systems of oppression.

COURAGE

We stand for policy and practice leadership informed by evidence and empathy, data and compassion, head and heart.

SERVICE

We have a responsibility to think beyond ourselves and act to uplift all.

THE REVITALIZATION OF NEWARK: A STORY OF RESILIENCE AND HOPE

PLENARY MODERATOR

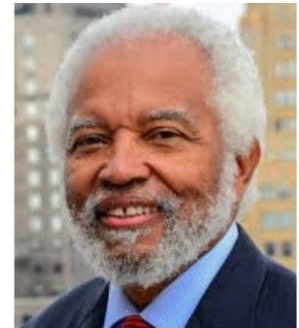


Diane Hill
FOUNDING DIRECTOR
Rutgers Center for Health
Excellence and Community
Empowerment



Thursday, May 28, 2026
9:45 AM - 11:00 AM

HISTORICAL COMMENTATOR



Junius Williams, Esq
OFFICIAL NEWARK HISTORIAN

PLENARY PANELISTS



David Troutt

FOUNDER AND DIRECTOR
Rutgers Center on Law
Metropolitan Equity (CLiME)



Aisha Browne Glover

GLOBAL HEAD
Urban Innovation
Audible, Inc



Andrea Martinez-Mejia

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Greater Newark
Health Care Coalition

SELC KEYNOTE SPEAKER LUNCHEON



Dale G. Caldwell

Lieutenant Governor of New Jersey

 **Thursday, May 28, 2026**

12:30 PM - 1:45 PM

HOLDING ON TO SOCIAL EQUITY IN CHALLENGING TIMES



PLENARY MODERATOR

SAMUEL MYERS, JR

ROY WILKINS PROFESSOR OF HUMAN RELATIONS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE, HUBERT H. HUMPHREY SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS, UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

 **Thursday, May 28, 2026**

3:15 PM - 4:30 PM

PLENARY PANELISTS



Susan Gooden

DEAN

Virginia Commonwealth
University



RaJade M. Berry-James

SENIOR ASSOCIATE DEAN

Virginia Commonwealth
University



Luke Jones

SECRETARY

Society of American Indian
Government Employees (SAIGE)



Jesselly De La Cruz

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Latino Action Network
Foundation

FRIDAY, MAY 29TH 9:00-10:15 AM

**Panel 1: Safeguarding Civil Rights in Practice:
Administrative Design, Power, and Lived Experience**

Location: RBG Building, Room 207

Stephanie Dolamore, West Chester University of Pennsylvania; Angie Kline, West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Francois Melville, West Chester University of Pennsylvania
Yali Pang, Virginia Commonwealth University; Anila Surin, Virginia Commonwealth University

Moderator:

Erin Borry, The University of Alabama at Birmingham

**Panel 2: Leading by Convening: Reimagining
Engagement and Opportunity**

Location: RBG Building, 206

Lamont Repollet, Kean University

Tracey Ray Robinson, West Chester University

Mary Tschirhart, The George Washington University*

Marc Dashfield, President of the Wendell Group LLC

Moderator:

RaJade Berry-James, Virginia Commonwealth University*

**Panel 3: From Principles to Practice: Leadership
Pathways for Social Equity in the Public and Nonprofit
Sectors**

Location: RBG Building, 201

Saundra Prather, Prathertown Community Development Corporation; Carlyssa Prather, Human Rights Hall of Fame; Nic Bloom, Prathertown Community Development Corporation; Corey Lewis, Maryland State Archives

Charles Menifield, Rutgers University-Newark; Diane Hill, Rutgers University-Newark*

Kecia Addison, Montgomery County Public Schools

Moderator:

Kimberly Desmond, City of San Diego, California

**Roundtable 1: When Equity Is on the Line: Values-
Forward Nonprofit Leadership at a Time of Threat**

Location: RBG Building, Room 123

Jeehae Fischer, Korean American Family Service Center

Carla Chávez, ACLU of New Jersey

Kimberly Watson, Graham

Moderator:

Stella Billings, Safe Horizon

FRIDAY, MAY 29TH 10:30-11:45 AM

Morning Plenary: Challenges to Governing: Gender as an Added Dimension

Location: RBG Building, Great Hall

Maria D'Agostino, Initiative for Gender Equity in the Public Sector

Allison Chris Meyers, NJ Civil Service Commission

Amina Bey, Newark City Council

Gale Brewer, New York City Council

Debbie Walsh, Center for American Women and Politics

FRIDAY, MAY 29TH 12:00-1:30 PM

SELCA Awards Luncheon

Location: RBG Building, Great Hall

Presenter:

James-Christian Blockwood, National Academy of Public Administration*

Recipients:

Sylvester Murray, Philip J. Rutledge Social Equity Leadership Award Winner*

Heather McGhee, H. George Frederickson Lecturer

FRIDAY, MAY 29TH 1:45-3:00 PM

Panel 4: Carrying Responsibility: Experience, Commitment, and Endurance in Public Service Leadership

Location: RBG Building, Room 201

Malcolm Oliver, Thomas Edison State University

Kishon C. Hickman, Sr., Seton Hall University

Christopher J. Schultz, Kean University

Panel 5: Budgeting for Equity

Location: RBG Building, 123

Merlene Patrice Bourdeau Quispe, Southern University A&M College; Melissa McShea, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Marilyn Rubin, Rutgers University-Newark*

Alexis Kennedy, Colorado State University; Youngsung Kim, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies; Kelli Davison, Colorado State University; Nathan Dettlebach, Colorado State University

Juan Pablo Martinez Guzman, University of Maryland; Meagan Jordan, University of Arkansas

Moderator:

Domonic Bearfield, George Washington University*

Roundtable 2: Creating Justice in a Multiracial Democracy: New Will for Evidence Based Policies that Work

Location: RGB Building, Room 207

Alan Curtis, The Eisenhower Foundation

Panel 6: Defining Equity in Practice: Gender Data, and Due Process Across Public Systems

Location: RBG Building, Room 206

Erin Sullivan, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Melissa Brock, John Jay College of Criminal Justice; Margaret Mikulski, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Meghan Scarlot, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Zion DaCosta, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Moderator:

Maria D'Agostino, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

FRIDAY, MAY 29TH 3:15-4:30 PM

Afternoon Plenary: Innovations for Enhancing Equity in Public Safety – Newark’s Story

Location: RBG Building, Great Hall

Jeremy Travis, CUNY, Institute for State & Local Governance (ISLG)*

Jordan Costa, GIFFORDS Center for Violence Intervention

Peter Harvey, Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP

William Simpson II, Victoria Foundation

Aqeela Sherrills, Community Based Public Safety Collective

FRIDAY, MAY 29TH 4:45-6:00 PM

Panel 7: Reimagining Public Administration Praxis: Queer[ing] Theoretical and Empirical Approaches

Location: RBG Building, Room 207

José Luis Irizarry, North Carolina Central University

Diego Galego, Rutgers University-Newark

Michelle Evans, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Moderator:

Maria D’Agostino, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Kelly Mulligan, Newark Community Solutions

Warren Thompson, Lincoln Park Coast Cultural District

Adriana Santos, Newark Public Safety Collaborative

Munazzah Shahbaas, Newark Public Safety Collaborative

Moderator:

Alejandro Gimenez Santana, Newark Public Safety Collaborative

Panel 8: Addressing Democratic Backsliding and Human Rights Threats

Location: RBG Building, Room 201

Aleemah Williams, Northeastern University

Simone Martin-Howard, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Xin Han, Montana State University

Moderator:

James Blaney, Newark City Council

Workshop 1: Beyond Extraction: Building AI Systems that Honor Community Wisdom

Location: RBG Building, Room 206

Tiasia O’Brien, Seam Social Labs

Kenyatta McLean, Seam Social Labs

Roundtable 3: From Data to Action: Co-Producing Community Safety in Newark

Location: RBG Building, Room 123

FRIDAY, MAY 29TH 6:00-7:30 PM

EVENING RECEPTION, RBG BUILDING, GREAT HALL

CHALLENGES TO GOVERNING: GENDER AS AN ADDED DIMENSION



PLENARY MODERATOR

MARIA D'AGOSTINO

CO-DIRECTOR, INITIATIVE FOR GENDER EQUITY
IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR,
JOHN JAY COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

📅 **Friday, May 29, 2026**
10:30AM - 11:45AM

PLENARY PANELISTS



Allison Chris Meyers

FORMER CHAIRWOMAN/CEO
NJ Civil Service Commission



Amina Bey

MEMBER
Newark City Council



Gale Brewer

MEMBER
New York City Council



Debbie Walsh

DIRECTOR
Center for American Women
and Politics

SELCA AWARDS LUNCHEON/ H. GEORGE FEDERICKSON LECTURE



PRESENTER

JAMES-CHRISTIAN BLOCKWOOD

*PRESIDENT AND CEO, NATIONAL ACADEMY OF
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION*



Friday, May 29, 2026

12:00PM - 1:30PM



Sylvester Murray

Philip J. Rutledge
Social Equity Leadership Award



Heather McGhee

H. George Federickson Lecturer

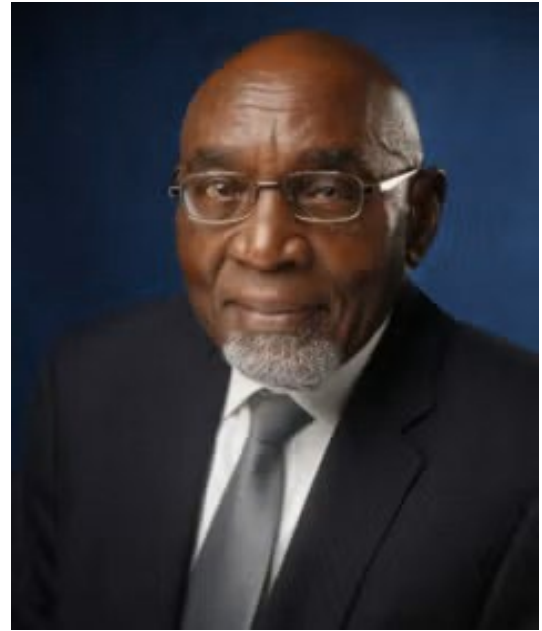
2026 PHILLIP J. RUTLEDGE AWARD / FREDERICKSON LECTURE

H. George Frederickson Lecturer



Heather McGhee designs and promotes solutions to inequality in America. Throughout her career in public policy, including her time serving as the president of the non-partisan “think and do” tank Dēmos, she has crafted legislation, testified before Congress, and helped shape presidential campaign platforms. She is the author of the New York Times bestselling book *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*. The book discusses how we have to unwind the idea of a fixed quantity of prosperity and replace it with what she calls Solidarity Dividends which are gains available to everyone when they unite across racial lines. Heather is an educator and most recently served as a Distinguished Visiting Lecturer in Urban Studies at the City University of New York’s School of Labor and Urban Studies. An influential voice in the media, she regularly appears on NBC’s *Meet the Press* and MSNBC’s *Morning Joe*, *Deadline White House* and *All In*.

Phillip J. Rutledge Social Equity Leadership Award



Sylvester Murray has devoted his career to breaking barriers and advancing social equity, following a path similar to his friend and colleague Phil Rutledge. A graduate of Lincoln University, the nation’s first degree-granting HBCU, Sy was one of the first Black city managers in the United States when appointed in Inkster, Michigan, in 1968. Over two decades as a city manager in Inkster, Ann Arbor, Cincinnati, and San Diego, Sy championed inclusive hiring practices that opened doors for minorities and women. He became the first African American president of the International City Managers Association, winning the office after overcoming resistance to his historic candidacy. Following his years in city management, Sy served on the faculties of Jackson State University and Cleveland State University. In NAPA, working with Phil Rutledge, Sy was instrumental in the organization’s decision to establish the Standing Panel on Social Equity in Governance. He has been an active member of the Panel since its inception and has also served NAPA as Treasurer and is currently the Leader of the Africa Working Group - International Panel.

INNOVATIONS FOR ENHANCING EQUITY IN PUBLIC SAFETY – NEWARK’S STORY



PLENARY MODERATOR JEREMY TRAVIS

SENIOR FELLOW, CUNY, INSTITUTE FOR STATE & LOCAL
GOVERNANCE (ISLG) & PRESIDENT EMERITUS, JOHN JAY
COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

📅 **Friday, May 29, 2026**
3:15 PM - 4:30 PM

PLENARY PANELISTS



Jordan Costa

ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
GIFFORDS Center for Violence
Intervention



Peter Harvey

FORMER ATTORNEY GENERAL OF NEW JERSEY
Patterson Belknap Webb & Tyler LLP



William Simpson II

STRATEGY OFFICER
Victoria Foundation



Aqeela Sherrills

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Community Based
Public Safety Collective

Panel 1: Equity and Governance in Environmental Risk and Disasters

Location: SPAA Building, Room 215

Katherine Aaron, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Jason Rivera, John Jay College of Criminal Justice

Pooja Paswan, Jamia Millia Islamia

Christopher Koliba, University of Kansas*

D'Arlyn Bell, Indian Center of Kansas City

Moderator:

Kimberly Walton, NAPA Fellow & SynergyUSA, LLC.*

Roundtable 1: Building Trust Through Leadership: Practical Strategies for Engaging Marginalized Communities

Location: SPAA Building, Room 203

Vivan Frazier, Virginia Commonwealth University

Albert Okwei, Virginia Commonwealth University

Amidu Kalokoh, Virginia Commonwealth University

Moderator:

Curtis Brown, Virginia Commonwealth University

Workshop 1: Charting a Path Forward in the Era of ICE: An Ideation and Action Workshop

Location: SPAA Building, Room 201

Brian Williams, University of Virginia*

Joshua Williams, University of Virginia

Panel 2: Meeting Community Needs Through Educational Initiatives

Location: SPAA Building, Room 117

Al Gourrier, University of Baltimore

Yoshira Macias Mejia, Montclair State University; Ruben

Martinez, Michigan State University

Shanice Lyons, Livingstone College

Moderator:

Wendy Nicholson, Independent Social Equity Strategist

Panel 3: Formulating a Shared Agenda for Moving the Nonprofit Sector Forward: Responses to a Sector Under Siege

Location: SPAA Building, Room 309

Roseanne Mirabella, Kean University; Angela Eikenberry, University of Connecticut; Billie Sandberg, Portland State University

Bok Gyo Jeong, Kean University; Claire Yun, Kean University

Michael Taylor, Seton Hall University; Mohamed Shaheen, Kean University

Jeffery Wilson, Virginia Commonwealth University; Jackie Okao, Virginia Commonwealth University

Moderator:

Roseanne Mirabella, Kean University

Posters Session

Location: SPAA Building, 2nd Floor Corridor

Jocelyn Lewis-Johnson, University of Delaware

Jonathan Wong, University of Nebraska Omaha

Amarachi Chuka-Maduji, University of Delaware; Stephen Metraux, University of Delaware

Yvonne Dadson, University at Albany, SUNY

Mary Strawderman, Virginia Commonwealth University

Nisa Albert, University at Albany, SUNY; DeeDee Bennett

Gayle, University at Albany, SUNY; Yvonne Dadson, University at Albany, SUNY

Morgan Higman, Florida State University

Noelle Hardy, Rutgers University

Adrian Ghainda, Rutgers University

SATURDAY, MAY 30TH 10:30-11:45 AM

Roundtable 2: Building Future Public Servants Through Participatory Research and Community Action

Location: SPAA Building, Room 215

Fariba Akter, Youth Action Institute
Madison Brathwaite, Youth Action Institute
Isaiah Billings, Youth Action Institute
Daniel Comas, Youth Action Institute
Sarah Duncan, Youth Action Institute
Andrea Pineda, Youth Action Institute
Amelia Ramirez, Youth Action Institute

Moderator:

Dee Mandiyan, Youth Action Institute

Workshop 2: A Seat at the Table: Strategies for Equitable Engagement in Dynamic Environments

Location: SPAA Building, 201

Kye Tavernier, City of Austin
Justin Parsons, City of Austin

Panel 4: Governing Equity Under Constraint: How Federal Policy Shifts Reshape State, Local, and Nonprofit Responses

Location: SPAA Building, Room 117

Amari K. Rivera, Northeastern University
Aleemah N. Williams, Northeastern University
Gloria Fortner, Northeastern University
James T. Cerone, Northeastern University
Joseph Bostic, Retention Frontiers, Inc.

Moderator:

Akua Tetteh, Northeastern University

Panel 5: Social Vulnerability, Diversity and the Enhancement of Equity

Location: SPAA Building, Room 203

Joshua Steinfeld, Bowie State University
Wendy Nicholson, Independent Social Equity Strategist
Michael Brown, O.W.O.W., Inc.
Carey Brown, Kean University

Moderator:

Michael Jacobson, NAPA Standing Panel on Social Equity in Governance*

Panel 6: Risk, Justice and Representation

Location: SPAA Building, Room 309

Christopher Koliba, University of Kansas*; D'Arlyn Bell, Indian Center of Kansas City; Maggie Swenson, University of Wyoming; Maja Holmes, University of Kansas
Merlene Patrice Bourdeau Quispe, Southern University A&M College; Cryshanna Jackson-Leftwich, Youngstown State University
Danielle Gadson, Villanova University
Celeste Greene, Norfolk State University
Elsa-Sofia Morote, John Jay College of Criminal Justice
Moderator:
Richard Greene, Frederickson Center for Social Equity*

SATURDAY, MAY 30TH 12:00-1:15 PM

Closing Plenary: The Future of Equity in a Changing World

Location: SPAA Building, Room 104

Roger Hartley, University of Baltimore*
Mariana Monteiro, Office of Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont
Markus Green, Dicello Levitt, LLP
Mary Guy, University of Colorado – Denver*
Hon. Julien Xavier Neals, U.S. District Court, District of New Jersey

THE FUTURE OF EQUITY IN A CHANGING WORLD



PLENARY MODERATOR

ROGER HARTLEY

*PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE COLLEGE OF
PUBLIC AFFAIRS; PRESIDENT-ELECT, AMERICAN SOCIETY
FOR PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION*

📅 **Saturday, May 30, 2026**
12:00PM - 1:15PM

PLENARY PANELISTS



Mariana Monteiro

CHIEF OPPORTUNITY OFFICER
Office of Connecticut
Governor Ned Lamont



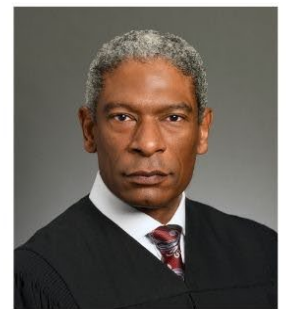
Markus Green

PARTNER
Dicello Levitt, LLP



Mary Guy

DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR
School of Public Affairs
University of Colorado Denver



Hon. Julien Xavier Neals

JUDGE U.S. DISTRICT COURT
District of New Jersey

RUTGERS SPAA IS PROUD TO CO-HOST SELC 2026

Rutgers School of Public Affairs and Administration (SPAA) is committed to promoting and practicing social equity through teaching, research, and service.



Rutgers SPAA is honored to be recognized as a leader in the advancement of social equity and diversity as the recipient of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA):

- Diversity Award (2021)
- Social Equity Award (2019)

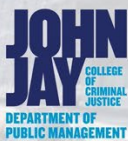
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